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ABSTRACT

More and more older adults are returning to college, either to complete academic degrees or to take refresher courses in their professional areas. Educators can accommodate nontraditional students' needs by understanding the motivations that bring these students back to school and by providing them with educational counseling that will enhance their learning ability. Some of the adult learner's counseling problems include lack of self-confidence, unrealistic expectations for progress, fixed values and attitudes that conflict with other students' attitudes, impatience with abstract or general learning tasks, failure to seek help before problems get out of hand, and lack of efficient reading and study habits. Drake University's College for Continuing Education has developed an orientation course, called the Back-to-School Survival Skills Program, that helps older adults reacquaint themselves with the college environment and deal with problems they may encounter. The program has been highly successful, receiving enthusiastic support from its students and national attention that should prompt its implementation at other schools. (RI)

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YESTERDAY'S STUDENT---TOMORROW'S CHALLENGE

Invitational Banquet Address

by

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Yesterday's Student---Tomorrow's Challenge
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The Return to School Movement

More and more adults are going back to college these days, both to complete academic degrees and to take refresher courses to update their professional education. The Supreme Court of Iowa has recently mandated continuing education for lawyers, and there are similar requirements in nursing, real estate, and medicine. There is a movement among most licensed occupations to require continuing education today, and an unbelievable growth in business and industry requiring updating of their professional employees. In the last 10 years there has been an exponential rise in the number of programs being developed and staff being employed to respond to the substantial increase in adults engaged in a myriad of traditional and non-traditional educational programs. In 1962, there was an estimated 25 million people attending some form of adult education program; in 8 years this figure has increased to 31 million. An additional 48 million indicated an "interest" in some kind of further learning in a study conducted by Cross, Valley and Associates. This upward trend is projected to continue at least for the remainder of this century.

Iowa's state universities have reversed the trends of recent years and for the second year in succession are seeing increased enrollments. Officials attribute these increases to more dropouts

returning to school, fewer juniors and seniors leaving school before graduation, and the presence on campus for the first time of a larger percentage of minority students and married women returning to school in order to prepare themselves to enter the world of work. A review of the enrollment at the College for Continuing Education at Drake indicated that thirty per cent of Drake students taking courses for college credit are adults returning to school at least part time. This figure is as much as 60 per cent if all noncredit activity course projects are included in the figure. This represents an increase of about thirty percent in the last five years in part-time students enrollments for credit and doubles the number of students taking noncredit courses.

Colleges faced with dropping birth rate and enrollments are encouraging this trend to re-education. If our institutions of higher education are to maintain their facilities, it will be necessary to accommodate to the needs of the nontraditional student.

Need to Understand the Non-Traditional Learner

In order to assist this student one must understand the nature of the motivation which prompts them to continue their education as well as the changes in the role of education in Modern American life. It has been customary, traditionally, to consider education as an activity of youth, roughly between 6 and 18 years of age. (Many people do not realize that.) High school education has not become the norm until about the last 25 years. An appreciable proportion of the population did not even go to college until after World War II.

At the turn of the century, it was considered adequate for an

individual to be able to read, write, and to do simple mathematics. In a largely agrarian economy there was little financial support available for students who wanted to attend school. There was plenty of work to be done on the farm, and each child was considered a financial asset important to the family's survival. Most people made their living through hard, physical labor and had little leisure time to devote to study except in unusual cases. There was little background upon which to build higher levels of education, and the life environment of many was not very intellectually stimulating.

Today things have changed considerably. Education is at a premium because most of the financial advantage comes from work which is intellectual rather than physical in nature. Most people live in populated areas or great cities in which opportunities for higher education are more abundant. Instead of growing up, working, and dying in a small geographical area doing a single task, people today have greater mobility, and opportunities to change occupations make possible economic upward mobility for many. Living in proximity to others put a greater premium on citizenship, parenthood, and the ability to get along with others. Such things are often learned best when the institutions which govern modern life are better understood, and this requires education.

Because of added leisure time with the advent of the 40-hour week and the compulsory 65-year retirement age, there is much more leisure among the population. Learning is a natural activity for the inquisitive mind, and many people enjoy learning for its own sake. Such people are attracted to education in its purest sense. the development of human potential, the appreciation of intellectual

and artistic efforts. There are no doubt important incentives in education because of its applicability to employment. And the pressure of licensing to insure competency in many professional areas has made formal education an absolute requirement in these areas.

Changing Role of Mature Citizens

Historically, the older members of a society constituted a smaller proportion of the total group. Although the word "old" itself is a relative term, the impact of this segment of the population that understood life better from experience and served to preserve the institutions and culture of the group was determined largely on the basis of its longevity. Training was predominantly by word of mouth and from father to son; there was very little formal education available for the group as a whole. The young seemed to learn most things from these elders. This was natural and even inevitable when the impact of an individual experience on the pool of common wisdom was direct and apparent in a small society. However, with the advent of printing, the store of human experience upon which society could draw became increasingly impersonal, and the contributions of a single individual gradually became less significant except in rare instances.

As the pool of available experience became more easily accessible, learning itself began to expand at an increasing rate until society could no longer rely on the validity of the knowledge of any single individual or group as a guide to its future action. The consequence has been change on a scale unknown in history and a promise of future change that staggers the imagination.

One consequence of this change is the individual has actually become less relevant or obsolete with age instead of more significant and influential with increasing age, unless the individual be given assistance in keeping up with this rate of change through all his productive years. Improved health, extended life expectancy, economic and material prosperity, and an increased level of aspiration combine with economic necessity to make education a process that can no longer be viewed as the prime concern of the first two decades of life. Social survival makes it imperative that education continue in some formal way through a much longer period of one's life.

Impact of Change on Education

These trends will obviously have a significant impact on our educational institutions which currently are largely youth oriented. In America, particularly, the college campus has been dominated by a sort of youth culture, perhaps reflecting the values of modern American civilization. So long as young people are gathered in large numbers, it is only natural that their values should dominate the world of education, but that world is rapidly changing. The declining birth rate has already limited the actual number of youths available for higher education. Changes in family life, occasioned by the absence of children have also tended to encourage women to venture into new worlds of competition and employment. At the societal level, lessened preoccupation with childhood and child rearing has served to heighten personal awareness in many adults who are now seeking fulfillment in their own lives rather than in that of their offspring. An effort to maintain or advance the standard of living in an inflationary economy has made many acutely aware of their educational limitations, especially minorities, and given rise

to various political movements aimed at social reforms through the manipulation of governmental power.

Add to this equation the improved health and longevity of mature adults with the attendant leisure of retirement years which are spent in a stimulating environment, it becomes clear that education is a primary process of keeping current in this rapidly changing technological society. It should not be surprising then that considerable change in the college campus is becoming inevitable in the very near future. Such changes will create a need for trained personnel who are capable of assisting these people in formulating and achieving their personal ends through the educational process.

Educational Counseling for Adults

Meeting the needs of adult learners in this context implies a concurrent demand for counseling and advising skills. As more persons are becoming engaged in educational counseling, it becomes more important to formally define what is signified by the term. In practice, educational counseling can be defined very simply as counseling for overcoming educational handicaps. The term counseling refers to a process of communicating deeper concerns to another for assistance in resolving conflicts or gaining more objective views of the nature of problems. The phrase "educational handicaps" refers to training or skill deficiencies of an academic sort which make further learning in a particular area either unnecessarily difficult, unlikely, or even impossible.

The distinction between educational counseling and other types of counseling is primarily a matter of orientation. Before anything

can be a counseling matter, it must usually pose some difficulty or threat to the person or some aspect of his effective pursuit of self-fulfillment. In educational counseling, the central focus is on learning difficulties encountered in formal educational processes. This sort of counseling differs from psychotherapy primarily in the depth and nature of the problems dealt with. The counseling processes properly identified with psychotherapy are generally of such basic sorts that they affect a great portion of the total life functioning of the individual. Increasingly in today's society, there are numerous situations in which, in a broad sense, one's life functioning can be seriously impaired due to academic or scholastic difficulties. One must therefore be prepared to find a number of educational counseling cases that resemble psychotherapy because of the central role of education in survival in today's society.

Such educational counseling applied to adults as a distinct group is becoming increasingly more significant because education is fast becoming a necessity of life in our society. Learning today has taken on new dimensions because of the nature of our society. Education can no longer be limited to a certain period of childhood development. Society has changed and will continue to change to such an extent and with such rapidity that in the course of the normal working life, any individual can expect the need to be re-educated or re-trained several times before retirement. Formal education then is becoming a life-long need today, and is crucial for individual economic survival in a changing world.

No doubt individuals have more personal reasons for wishing to further their education as well. They wish to know how to get

along with others better, how to make a positive contribution to solving social problems, how to enrich their leisure time, how to develop their human potential, and especially women, how to live in a freer society. People naturally enjoy the learning process and this natural tendency is further enhanced by elementary and secondary educational processes when they are successful.

Most persons entering adult education programs have specific goals in mind. It may be phrased in somewhat general terms for some, for example, learning to accept social responsibility; it may be more specific for others, for example, to prepare for a particular job. Often adults enter education to satisfy psychological needs because they feel intellectually alone and seek stimulating companionship of fellow learners. Undoubtedly a large number of adults enter education simply because they are curious and enjoy the challenge which study offers. From the motives for education comes its emotional significance to the individual.

Types of Educational Counseling Cases

1. Anxious learners

In reviewing a number of cases, it will become apparent that fear in some form or another is a primary complication in the learning of a rather large proportion of adult learners. A certain percentage of individuals undertake educational programs with enthusiasm and determination only to be overwhelmed by an increasing concern about their ability to progress or learn. This concern makes it increasingly difficult for them to concentrate on their studies. In this condition they tend to exaggerate family difficulties, financial problems, etc., and soon begin to fail examinations and get behind

in their work. If such individuals are exposed to criticism or correction at this time, they are almost certain to withdraw from school. The root of their problem lies in a poor self-concept and a need for signs of support to bolster their sense of insecurity. A young widow client, seeing her limited insurance and savings being spent on securing her education and fearing ultimate failure, suddenly decided to leave school and take a job as a secretary when she received a low mark on a midterm exam. The position she took was not commensurate with her ability and not particularly appealing, but it was able to allay her anxiety and insecurity about herself, therefore she readily resigned herself to a life's work that could only lead to frustration because it did not provide her with an outlet for her creative talents. Her problem, of course, was primarily psychological in nature, not academic; however, the two work so closely together that they can easily be confused by the student without proper guidance.

2. Frustrated learner

The difficulties of another large group of learners centers around the concept of frustration in various forms. At times individuals who appear relatively successful and financially secure review their lives and accomplishments and become gravely dissatisfied with their estimate of their achievements and lives. Often they have been profoundly influenced by a special insight given them by another well-educated or stimulating individual with whom they have had special contact. This type of individual decides to change things and enrolls in college courses and begins work with enthusiasm and energetic dedication with no thought of failure. Unfortunately,

after a few weeks these students may come to realize that study is quite demanding and interferes substantially in their leisure life activities. When these individuals realize the work ahead of them, they begin to question their capacity and rather easily conclude that they lack the intelligence or talent to pursue the subject further. They often rationalize that they are not really interested in the subject and drop the course, but because they have a past success pattern to build on, they will frequently attempt several other courses with very similar disappointing experiences until eventually they give up entirely in despair. The tragedy of this type of student is that their vision of what life could be has made them hopelessly dissatisfied with what they have, yet it will be forever impossible for them to realize their ideals. Counseling in this situation may approach the level of psychotherapy.

3. Impulsive or superficial learner

A final type of learner frequently encountered in adult education may be described as the impulsive student. These students are frequently financially independent, and lead busy social lives. They have means and talents and put both to use in the solution of various social problems by applying their energies in various volunteer programs, charities, civic projects, and the support of the arts. At times such individuals are seeking an integrating influence in their lives, something that will give deeper meaning and more permanent satisfaction to their existence and they may begin taking courses as part of this search.

It is important for the counselor to be able to distinguish between this impulsive type of learner, who begins an educational

program without reflection or intelligent planning, from the student who simply grows beyond the topics studied. The thirst for new challenges and different learning experiences to satisfy the individual's curiosity is positive and grows with the accretion of knowledge, and should not be confused with the type of individual who is taking course work not to satisfy curiosity as such but as a form of entertainment or escape. Such students generally succeed in their work because they are naturally talented, but they become dilatants and psuedo intellectuals without much scholarly substance or honest personal growth. Study as a form of recreation is not bad if it is recognized as such, but it may develop into cynicism and lay the groundwork for a know-it-all, smug personality.

Counseling Problems of Adult Learners

It is useful to know the more common problems of adult learners in order to be better prepared to assist them in achieving their educational objectives. These general problems seldom occur in isolation and can be expected to be functioning more or less simultaneously in various degrees at any given moment for any individual.

Problem 1--Lack of Self-Confidence

Probably no other single problem is more universally encountered in counseling individuals with educational problems than the lack of confidence in their ability to learn. It is almost universally true that adults, to some degree at least, feel they are unable to learn as well now as when they were young. At the cognitive level, most people recognize that not everyone can learn everything, that people differ in intelligence, physical strength, dexterity, special talents, and they are able to understand that only a few people become

outstanding novelists, mathematicians, poets, etc.. The concern of adults is not with outstanding achievement but a fear that they are below average. They fear they cannot learn what even normal people are able to learn.

This fear appears to have two primary sources: first, a belief that somehow age limits one's learning ability, and, secondly, an emotional concern that some important element is lacking or neglected in their personal development. They wonder, for example, whether they have normal intelligence, or whether they have the talent needed for learning a particular subject field.

Such people need to be reassured by a counselor who knows enough psychology to answer specific questions about learning abilities of adults. Experimental evidence indicates that a comparison of the relative learning ability of young people and adults does not suggest adults have any serious handicap in academic learning. Actually, adults appear able to learn most things a little better than youth, but it may take the adult a little longer.

Youth appears to have some advantage in learning which requires physical dexterity or strength, but this is not surprising. It must be pointed out, however, that even physical strength can often be greatly improved in older persons with scientifically designed exercises. The young appear to be able to remember things better when it comes to mastering rote learning tasks, that is, things that are not particularly meaningful in themselves. Adults may find it necessary to unlearn certain things in this area because their habits are more deeply set. While this would be a handicap in learning rote type of material, this is not the sort of learning

which is required in most educational programs. At any rate this is not an insurmountable difficulty because it can be overcome with additional practice in the careful development of associative patterns.

Adults have some advantage in learning because they generally have greater motivation. They have more settled purposes and needs and their attitude toward learning is more mature. These favorable dispositions help make learning more effective for them. With maturity the adult has acquired greater experience and developed a broader range of associative patterns and therefore a greater awareness of values, considerable practice in self-discipline and a better knowledge of personal abilities. These must all be accounted advantages.

This underlying anxiety or lack of self-confidence may not be apparent at the beginning of an educational program. It will, however, reveal itself quite readily when the student encounters difficulty in learning and begins to fall behind in his work. At this point, age becomes a rationalization and the student will frequently verbalize the belief that he cannot learn now as well as when he was young. Such people invariably say they have been away from studying for years and have forgotten how to use their mind. This is somewhat true and it may be advisable for older students returning to school to brush up on their learning skills, but it does not mean that he cannot learn as well as the student who has not been out of school at all. The student's study methods are far more important than age in most all cases.

In all honesty, one must admit that some adults in fact can't learn as well as youth. If they are slow learners now they possibly

were not very good learners as children either. Their problem is they feel that because they are adults they are expected to be able to do everything better than children. This is simply not true. So long as one works to capacity there is no need to make excuses for ability.

From the counseling point of view, if the adult has limited intellectual ability, concern should not be whether he is able to learn but rather what he should learn. The problem is one of suiting ambitions to abilities, or aspirations to aptitudes, not questioning abilities. When the educational problem seems to center around ability itself, as is often the case, the best course of action is to get a reliable diagnosis of that ability.

Most adults tend to underestimate their ability. When fears are expressed about their ability to learn, the counselor is well advised to ask such students, "How do you know for certain that you can't learn unless you try?" One need not aspire to become the world's leading authority in a field to find pleasure and satisfaction in studying a subject. From another point of view, the less a person knows or is the more there is to gain from study.

Counselors should expect that a good percentage of adults re-entering education will have dark moments and discouraging experiences and considerable self-doubt, and be prepared to deal with these by providing positive reinforcement and a realistic evaluation of both goals and abilities.

Problem 2--Unrealistic Expectations of Progress

During many years of life adults have learned to apply their efforts in areas where they are able to build on their past successes. To strike out into new and unfamiliar areas, therefore, might prove

very threatening to them. When a child attacks a problem, he expects to do much more work to achieve his goal than the average adult who somehow feels above all this. Adults act as if they are exceptions to the rule of hard work. Their goals are set, they are clear, they have considerable life experience, therefore they conclude they have an unusual advantage. However there is no royal road to learning, all must take the same route.

In counseling adults to set realistic goals, the following points should be considered.

a. One must be realistic about what can be achieved, especially about the amount of time required to achieve it.

b. One must be careful not to begin impulsively on an ambitious learning program about which he is poorly informed. The better one understands the work required, the better.

c. One must be certain that he really wants the chosen goal. Is it important personally, or is it just something which is nice or desirable? Is the work required proportionate to the value one sets on the goal?

d. After setting broad goals it is highly desirable to divide them into specific subgoals which one can achieve in short periods of time, perhaps monthly or even daily. Dividing a project into parts which can be completed quickly provides more immediate reinforcement which promotes sustained application. It is necessary to have clear measures of progress to sustain such motivation. When a class meets only once a week, the assignment should be divided if possible into daily tasks which are small and which can be accomplished in an

hour or so rather than devoting a very long period of study once a week. The completion of minor and daily and weekly goals provides an obvious means of measuring progress and nothing succeeds like success.

e. One should learn to enjoy the process as well as the goal of learning. Enjoying the process makes the work of achieving the goal much more pleasant and tends to make learning an integral part of one's life.

Problem 3--Conflicting Values and Attitudes

Attitudes and points of view strongly influence one's learning processes. As people grow they form definite opinions and attitudes which influence learning for good or ill. For example, an adult who has worked as a labor leader will approach an economics course from a substantially different viewpoint than an industrialist or one who has been associated with the management function of business.

Such fixed attitudes and values may cause difficulties for older persons attending classes in which a variety of points of view and attitudes toward a subject are not only tolerated but even encouraged. In this situation, the adult might feel the teacher knows no more than the students or is failing to exercise proper authority by not insisting on his own views. In counseling such students, one should try to develop an appreciation of the fact that an important part of education consists in developing an understanding of a variety of points of view.

Older adults might feel it is their duty to settle class problems and impose their view on all, or perhaps try to monopolize the conversation to keep the discussions orthodox. Such students should be

cautioned that these traits are not acceptable to the rest of the class and might make them feel unaccepted by the group. This does not imply that adults must not share their insights but they should not expect these opinions to have any greater weight than anyone else's. Sharing opinions is different from forcing one's ideas on others. It is useful to encourage such students to concentrate on learning why each person holds his view and try to understand the position, not correct it. Education becomes quite difficult for an individual whose values and opinions have hardened to the point that he cannot tolerate new ideas or opposition to his own position.

Problem 4--Abstract or General Learning Tasks

One advantage age gives an adult is the accumulation of past experiences which can serve as the basis for new associations. In this sense, one's entire life serves as a resource for background and perspective in learning. The requisite for deep understanding is the ability to form numerous associations between new material and previous learning. The more varied past experiences have been, the easier this becomes.

Many older individuals are impatient with subjects which are taught in general or theoretical fashions. This perspective or approach appears to them irrelevant to life as they have experienced it. Such attitudes complicate this kind of learning by adding a constant source of irritation. The counselor should encourage such students to compensate for these feelings by making special efforts to apply or relate their learning to their lives or life problems. The application of knowledge may profitably take the form of further questioning, argumentation, discussion, or problem solving.

An entirely new subject may be difficult to integrate in this manner. In this case it is useful to develop a background and acquire fundamental principles beforehand. Basic introductory books or popularized nonfiction books on the same topic are splendid resources. It might even be wise to take a noncredit refresher course before the student begins a degree program where grades are important.

Problem 5--Not Seeking Help Before Problems Are Serious

Because students themselves may be unaware of learning difficulties or be afraid to face them until these have been present for some time and make their presence felt through failure or threatened of failure, the counselor should be particularly sensitive to students' learning behavior early in their learning career.

Many students need a little extra help when beginning a completely new course of study. The best guide and counselor in learning will often be found in the teacher. The student should be encouraged to ask the teacher for supplementary materials which might be recommended as aids to learning the course.

Students should be made sensitive to signs that their learning is beginning to lag behind that of the rest of the class. Often this does not become apparent until the first test or quiz is returned. Unless students are given special help at this point, the stage may be set for ultimate failure. A good rule-of-thumb to follow is this, if a student cannot feel that he is making progress he is probably headed for difficulty. Checking class notes and study schedule are good sources to check for the possibility or difficulty.

Another area to consider when counseling with new students is

to help them become aware of the nature of the class they are taking by asking whether the class provides enough time for discussion or opportunities for applying what is being learned. An entirely lecture-oriented class is not likely to remain popular with adult students for long. These students are more inclined to participate in discussions, to raise questions, and seek concrete applications. Unfortunately, lectures alone do not permit this very often. Adults also seem to learn better in groups which provide opportunities for sharing ideas and in which they can profit from observing the mistakes of others. Another important quality of adult learning groups is a spirit of friendly rivalry. Too much competition can be threatening, but a friendly, accepting rivalry is more often stimulating, challenging, and supportive.

The amount and type of family support which is given adult learners in their studies is most important. Where the family is not sympathetic or cooperative with the student's educational aspirations, study can become very difficult indeed. Without family support, it takes unusual determination for a person to persevere very long. Everyone seems to need at least one close confidante who is supportive of his effort. Obviously the counselor is a prime candidate for the role.

Problem 6--Lack of Efficient Reading and Study Habits

The majority of adults returning to school would be well advised to enroll in short refresher courses on learning to learn and reading improvement at the outset of their program. If such a course is not available, at least a textbook on the subject should be reviewed very carefully. The major topics of concern include:

a. Preparing to learn, that is, setting the stage psychologically and physically for the learning process to occur. This includes clarification of educational goals, understanding program requirements, and knowledge of course requirements.

b. Organizing to learn--this implies that an individual develop a time schedule to allow for adequate study and travel time as well as gathering the necessary equipment, preparing a place for study at home or in the public library, or other place where the student can spend his time effectively.

c. Techniques of study--this will include textbook attack skills, methods of organization, outlining techniques, SQ3R reading, knowledge of how to use learning aids included in textbooks, etc.

d. Listening, notemaking, and test taking skills--students should be aware of the particular reading skills necessary to effectively study various subjects. They need to know what to look for when reading novels, essays, and poetry, for example, and should understand that they are not expected to read everything in the same way. Many adults have not thought about reading for specific purposes for many years and would do well to review a manual which would provide them with guidance and direction in learning to read for details, reading for the general idea, reading to understand principles, reading to discover organization, reading to solve problems, and reading to follow directions. Many such students would benefit from a course in vocabulary improvement. Special attention should be given to exam skills because many adults may not be familiar with the newer objective type tests frequently used in our schools.

These constitute the more common types of academic problems

of interest to educational counselors. It should be noted, however, that almost any other problem the student is having whether related to financial affairs, physical health, personal relations, self-concept, concern for society, etc. will have some bearing on learning ability. The process of education itself, however, is very frequently therapeutic and an effective remedy for many of these difficulties if the student can but persevere.

Given normal intelligence, average health, and even modest means probably the most important ingredient in the process of continuing education is perseverence. The value of many aids, services, and facilities offered adult students can be measured in terms of how they contribute to this one element of persistence. It is persistence that brings a person through dark periods in the growth pattern; it is persistence which guarantees ultimate success; it is persistence which enables counselors themselves to achieve their purpose in helping students.

Back to School Survival Skills Program

At Drake University, The College for Continuing Education in working with adults returning to school realizes that the adult student has needs that are different from the 18-year old high school graduate. They have more fears about various technical learning skills. "Will I be able to take a test, make notes, write a paper? Can I perform in a classroom of younger students?" There are also concerns about the use of campus facilities and sometimes too much embarrassment to ask the proper questions.

"Back to School Survival Skills" is an orientation course designed to meet the specific needs of the adult who is returning

or considering a return to college.

The objectives of the course are to provide the returning adult student with:

--A realistic and positive self-concept, particularly as it relates to the ability to learn

--An opportunity for personal assessment of present reading vocabulary, writing, and study skills

--Techniques for improving study skills such as reading to learn, concentration, improving memory

--Techniques for improving classroom skills such as listening, notemaking, test taking

--Information concerning supportive services offered at the university

--An orientation to the college campus using the library, campus tours, etc.

The course is offered for four days, from 7 to 10 p.m., carries 1.2 CEU's and the fee for enrollment is $35.

The first session is entitled Personal Development and Preparation for School. During the session, the importance of personal communication is stressed for new students. The need for awareness and to being open to new experiences is stressed. Exercises in using all five senses and discussion of the importance of awareness are part of the experience. A third major goal in the session is the understanding of self-concept and its influence on life and learning. Discussions center on how the student feels now and how to share feelings of younger students in the same college classroom. The advantages of the adult learner are presented and descriptions of negative and positive self-concepts which are present in many are evaluated. Ways of improving self-concepts complete the discussion.

Memory is the name of the game when it comes to studying in the minds of many people. Aids for memory therefore constitute an important discussion. The role of the student in class and the way to make contributions constructively to effective listening gathering differences of opinion, preparing properly, and speaking in a pleasant way are emphasized. The final area of discussion deals with writing skills and theme preparation. Such topics as organization, grammar, spelling, bibliographical references, and creativity are included.

During the second session, emphasis is laid on how to prepare oneself for learning and the development of a personal skills profile. Much of preparing to learn centers about knowing the campus itself, the various dimensions of academic success, ways of setting realistic academic goals, and the characteristics of successful students. Much of this is clarified by studying various handicaps which many people have which limit study efficiency and the need for effective planning and organizing of time.

The skills profile is both motivating and enlightening for adult students. In developing the profiles, students are given a reading test, vocabulary test, and study skills inventory and writing test. Subscores from these instruments are plotted on a profile sheet and specific remedies for particular deficiencies are checked off for attention.

The third session deals more directly with classroom skills, and reading improvement. Techniques of study, the study hour, effective textbook attack, reading to learn, improving concentration, and learning to remember what is read are all discussed and demonstrated with suitable exercises.

Other classroom skills presented include listening techniques, notemaking skills, and test taking methods. The Reading and Study Skills Clinic with its various services, counseling opportunities,

and credit courses are explained to the students. Testing and enrollment procedures are discussed and explained and students are given an opportunity to meet different members of the staff.

On the final day, students break up into small groups. After discussing the problems of group dynamics and the ways of forming groups, techniques of problem solving are all demonstrated through simulated exercises.

An exploration of the library with an interesting information finding assignment provides the students with an opportunity to use the library and learn where different types of information are located. Other places visited during campus tour include the administration building, the health services, the different colleges, and certain offices of importance such as registrar's office, campus security, job placement services, the student center, the fine arts complex, and the athletic field.

Students wishing to explore their vocational preferences have opportunities to complete the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory and have it interpreted on an appointment basis at the end of the program.

The program is tremendously popular and has been so enthusiastically received that it is now being considered as a permanent course offering. One of the features of the program which lends to its strength and possibly its popularity is the fact that once the student has diagnosed his deficiencies, the Reading and Study Skills Clinic is ready to provide the remedial program for support courses to remedy the deficiency. This is done through enrollment in a study skills course or in a reading improvement course. Offerings in the RSSC are set up on a modular basis so that students can select

specific skills which need improvement, and begin immediately to work on them. This has the advantage of being efficient of the student's time and providing immediate attention to discovered needs.

The program attracted national attention as a result of coverage given it by the Associated Press and Public Broadcasting Service. The College for Continuing Education and the RSSC together received something over one hundred inquiries about the program in the last three months.

Student evaluations of the effectiveness and suitability of the program for their needs is extremely high and the promise of the effectiveness of such programs elsewhere seems to bode well for the adults who will be returning to college in the years to come.